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Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 114 (a)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/48/632/Add.1)]

48/120. Effective implementation of international instruments on human rights, including reporting obligations under international instruments on human rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/111 of 16 December 1992, as well as other relevant resolutions,

Reaffirming that the effective implementation of United Nations human rights instruments is of major importance to the efforts of the Organization, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1/ to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Also reaffirming its responsibility to ensure the proper functioning of treaty bodies established pursuant to instruments adopted by the General Assembly and, in this connection, further reaffirming the importance of:

(a) Ensuring the effective functioning of systems of periodic reporting by States parties to these instruments,

(b) Securing sufficient financial resources to overcome existing difficulties with their effective functioning,

(c) Addressing questions of both reporting obligations and financial implications whenever elaborating any further instruments on human rights,

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1/ Resolution 217 A (III).

Recalling the conclusions and recommendations of the second meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, held at Geneva from 10 to 14 October 1988, 2/ and the endorsement of the recommendations aimed at streamlining, rationalizing and otherwise improving reporting procedures by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/111 and the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1993/16 of 26 February 1993, 3/

Noting the meeting, within the framework of the World Conference on Human Rights, of persons chairing treaty bodies together with those persons chairing each of the principal regional and other human rights bodies, 4/

Recalling in particular the conclusions and recommendations of the third and fourth meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, held at Geneva from 1 to 5 October 1990, 5/ and from 12 to 16 October 1992, 6/ respectively,

Expressing concern about the increasing backlog of reports on implementation by States parties of United Nations instruments on human rights and about delays in consideration of reports by the treaty bodies,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General 7/ on progress achieved in enhancing the effective functioning of the treaty bodies,

Taking note also of the relevant paragraphs of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, held from 14 to 25 June 1993, 8/

Welcoming the interim report of the updated study by the independent expert on possible long-term approaches to enhancing the effective operation of the human rights treaty system, 9/

1. Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies aimed at streamlining, rationalizing and otherwise improving reporting procedures, as well as the continuing efforts in this connection by the treaty bodies and the Secretary-General within their respective spheres of competence;

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2/ See A/44/98, sect. VII.

3/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 3, (E/1993/23), chap. II, sect. A.

4/ A/CONF.157/24 (Part II), annex VI.

5/ See A/45/636, annex.

6/ See A/47/628, annex.

7/ A/44/539, A/46/503 and A/48/508 and Corr.1.

8/ A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

9/ A/CONF.157/PC/62/Add.11/Rev.1.

2. Notes with satisfaction the interim report of the updated study by the independent expert on possible long-term approaches to enhancing the effective operation of the human rights treaty system and requests that the Commission on Human Rights review the proposals to be submitted in the final report of the independent expert with a view to recommending further action;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to give high priority to establishing a computerized database to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the treaty bodies;

4. Again urges States parties to make every effort to meet their reporting obligations and to contribute, individually and through meetings of States parties, to identifying and implementing ways of further streamlining and improving reporting procedures as well as enhancing coordination and information flow between the treaty bodies and with relevant United Nations bodies, including specialized agencies;

5. Welcomes the emphasis placed by the meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies 6/ and by the Commission on Human Rights on the importance of technical assistance and advisory services and, further to this end:

(a) Endorses the request of the Commission that the Secretary-General report regularly to the Commission on possible technical assistance projects identified by the treaty bodies;

(b) Invites the treaty bodies to give priority attention to identifying such possibilities in the regular course of their work of reviewing the periodic reports of States parties;

6. Endorses the recommendations of the meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies on the need to ensure financing and adequate staffing resources for the operations of the treaty bodies and, with this in mind:

(a) Reiterates its request that the Secretary-General provide adequate resources in regard to the various treaty bodies;

(b) Requests that the Secretary-General report on this question to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session and to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session;

7. Urges States parties to notify the Secretary-General, as depository of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 10/ and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 11/ of their acceptance of the amendments approved by the States parties, and the General Assembly in its resolution 47/111, for the purpose of funding the respective committees from the regular budget;

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10/ Resolution 2106 A (XX), annex.

11/ Resolution 39/46, annex.

8. Calls upon all States parties to fulfil without delay and in full their financial obligations, including their arrears, under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment until the amendments enter into force;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to take the necessary measures to ensure that the two committees established under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment meet as scheduled until the amendments enter into force;

10. Welcomes the report of the Secretary-General 12/ on the effective implementation of the conclusions and recommendations of the fourth meeting of persons chairing human rights treaty bodies, held in October 1992, particularly the holding of the meeting of the chairpersons and those persons chairing each of the principal regional and other human rights bodies at Vienna on 15 and 16 June 1993, within the framework of the World Conference on Human Rights, at which the "Vienna statement of the international human rights treaty bodies" was adopted; 13/

11. Requests the Secretary-General to take the appropriate steps in order to continue financing the biennial meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies from the available resources of the regular budget of the United Nations;

12. Decides to continue giving priority consideration, at its forty-ninth session, to the conclusions and recommendations of the meetings of persons chairing human rights treaty bodies, in the light of the deliberations of the Commission on Human Rights, under the item entitled "Human rights questions".

85th plenary meeting
20 December 1993

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12/ A/48/508 and Corr.1.

13/ A/CONF.157/TBB/4 and Add.1.